

**CAPITOL/DOWNTOWN CENTRAL CORRIDOR  
TASK FORCE  
AUGUST 15, 2006**

**MEETING NOTES**

**Task Force**

**Members Present:** Jose Gonzalez, Kristina Smitten, Paul Mohrbacher, Larry Englund, Jerry Hersman, Phil Mason, Mike Burns, Susan Rani, Pat Lamb, Kim Hyers, Deborah Rathman

**Guests Present:** Sheila Lynch, Paul Mandell, Joe Spencer, Karen Lyons, Roger Sorbel, Mark Voerding, Sarah Penman, Ruth Blackman

**Staff Present:** Lucy Thompson, Allen Lovejoy, Jess Rosenfeld

**Welcome and Introductions**

Co-chair Kristina Smitten welcomed task force members. She introduced a newly-appointed task force member, Jerry Hersman, and asked him to tell the group a bit about his background. The rest of the task force members introduced themselves as well.

**Review of Agenda and July 25 Meeting Summary**

There were no additions or changes to the agenda or meeting summary.

**Discussion of Results of July 25 Brainstorming**

Smitten reviewed the top issues and opportunities that came out of the brainstorming exercise from the last meeting. Paul Mohrbacher asked how much input the task force will have on station location. Lucy Thompson responded that it is the hope that the visioning process informs any decisions on the number and location of stations, as much as those decisions are based on development potential and/or land use impacts relative to alternative locations.

**Hiawatha Corridor Development Experience**

Mark Garner, with the Minneapolis Department of Community Planning and Economic Development, gave a presentation on LRT's role in shaping development along the Hiawatha Corridor in Minneapolis. Key conclusions he shared with the group include:

- Ridership has exceeded all expectations; 40% of the riders on the Hiawatha line are new to transit.
- The amount of adjacent development has also exceeded 2020 projections made in 1999. LRT has been a catalyst to build community support for plans and visions.
- While adjacent housing and commercial development are an important part of the neighborhood revitalization role of LRT, it has also been a catalyst to creating and reinforcing strong and active public places and streetscapes.
- One of the key economic development goals of the Hiawatha line is to provide affordable access to regional jobs and services.
- The key issues in the downtown segment of the Hiawatha corridor were: 1) utility relocations; 2) sidewalk modifications; 3) access to parking ramps;

- 4) connectivity to other forms of transit; and 5) overall management of the construction project.
- The key lessons learned, in addition to those noted in the PowerPoint presentation, include: 1) adopt an “agency-blind” perspective; 2) know the timelines for making decisions; and 3) the best way to guard against the loss of affordable housing is to increase housing choice for all (displacement of low-income residents has not been a huge issue in Minneapolis).
  - Fifth Street was chosen as the downtown street for LRT because it is the interface between the office core and riverfront.
  - Skyway connectivity was not a major issue in Minneapolis.
  - The Minneapolis planning process was not far enough ahead of construction to do any streetscape improvements along 5<sup>th</sup> Street as part of the project. Saint Paul is fortunate to be doing planning ahead of preliminary engineering so that this issue and opportunity can be addressed upfront.
  - A key challenge has been whether the private sector will step up and respond to the catalytic investment of LRT.

### **Downtown/Capitol Corridor Today**

Paul Mandell, staff for the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board (CAAPB), reviewed current zoning, planned memorials on the Capitol campus, and planned development within its jurisdiction. Lucy Thompson reviewed downtown zoning, planned development adjacent to the corridor, and relevant policies from the *Downtown Development Strategy* and *Fitzgerald Park Precinct Plan*. Smitten asked staff to prepare a “master” working map showing planned development and any “soft” sites along and adjacent to the corridor.

### **Upcoming Meeting Schedule**

Thompson handed out the latest meeting schedule and asked task force members to indicate their preference for a special meeting with the consultants in mid-September. She urged attendance at the public open house on September 16 at the Rondo Library, where the consultants will present what they heard during their focus group discussions in early August and some preliminary conclusions for the Central Corridor Vision and Development Strategy.

### **Miscellaneous Announcements**

Thompson handed out a copy of the Planning Commission resolution formally establishing the task force, and the latest version of the task force contact list. She also mentioned the upcoming Rail-Volution conference in Chicago and urged task force members to attend. It is an excellent conference on the interface between transit and land use/development.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lucy Thompson  
August 18, 2006